

8.5 Video

The Wright siblings

Dayton is a small city in Ohio in the USA. It only has a population of around 140,000 people, but it's famous all over the world. Why? Because the Wright brothers lived here. Orville and Wilbur Wright were the first people to fly an aeroplane. As young men, they started a printing business and then opened the town's first bicycle shop. They even invented their own bicycle. But their dream was to fly. In 1899, they started to make a glider and they soon added engines and a propeller. In 1900, they moved to Kitty Hawk in North Carolina. Here they tested different machines and on 17th December 1903, they were successful with the Wright Flyer I. Today, almost everybody knows the Wright brothers' story, but most people don't know about their sister, Katharine. Katharine Wright was born in the Wright family home on 19th August 1874. She studied at Oberlin College, which was unusual at the time because there weren't a lot of colleges for women. She finished her degree in 1898 and moved back to Dayton. Here, she started work as a teacher in the local high school. But after Orville and Wilbur's famous flight, everything changed. Suddenly the brothers were famous all over the world. This was difficult because they were both very shy. But luckily Katharine wasn't. She was an excellent businesswoman, too. She helped to build the Wright Company and even started to fly with the brothers. She was an important part of the family business and

travelled across the United States and Europe with her brothers. After that, the siblings returned to their home in Dayton and they all helped with the business. The brothers created their third aeroplane – the Wright Flyer III – and tested it here at the Huffman Prairie flying field. Orville and Wilbur Wright lived in Dayton for the rest of their lives, but life was very different. They were American heroes and they were famous all over the world. They started a company and were very successful. Wilbur died in 1912. Katharine married the journalist Henry Haskell and moved to Kansas in 1926. Sadly, she died three years later. Orville continued to work with planes. He even helped to re-make the Wright Flyer III. His last flight was in April 1944 and he died in 1948. Wilbur, Orville and Katharine were very close and together they changed the world forever.